CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-selected products,

2   comprising the steps of:

3   (a)   receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user, wherein each product

4   identifier is associated with a particular product;

5   (b)   generating a list of the products;

6   (c)   searching for vendors of the products on the list;

7   (d)   selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined criteria; and

8   (e)   outputting information about the selected vendor.

1   2.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the product identifier is a representation

2   of a bar code associated with the product.

1   3.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the vendor is selected based on the

2   number of products on the list available from the vendor.

1   4.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the criteria for selecting the vendor

2   include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor, availability of delivery,

3   whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability, shipping availability,

4   tracking availability, and a loyalty program.

1   5.   A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of determining an

2   availability of the products at each of a plurality of vendors, determining costs of

3   the products charged by each of the vendors, and outputting summaries of the

4   determinations.

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1   6.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein a promotional offer is output with the

2   information about the selected vendor.

1   7.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein steps (a)-(e) are repeated in real time

2   each time a product identifier is received from the user.

1   8.   A computer program product for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-

2   selected products, comprising:

3   (a)   computer code for receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user,

4   wherein each product identifier is associated with a particular product;

5   (b)   computer code for generating a list of the products;

6   (c)   computer code for searching for vendors of the products on the list;

7   (d)   computer code for selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined

8   criteria; and

9   (e)   computer code for outputting information about the selected vendor.

1   9.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the product

2   identifier is a representation of a bar code associated with the product.

1   10.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the vendor is

2   selected based on the number of products on the list available from the vendor.

1   11.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the criteria for

2   selecting the vendor include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor,

3   availability of delivery, whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability,

4   shipping availability, tracking availability, and a loyalty program.

1   12.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, further comprising computer

2   code for determining an availability of the products at each of a plurality of

3   vendors, computer code for determining costs of the products charged by each

4   of the vendors, and computer code for outputting summaries of the

5   determinations.

1   13.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein a promotional offer

2   is output with the information about the selected vendor.

1   14.   A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the computer code is

2   executed in real time each time a product identifier is received from the user.

1   15.   A system for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-selected products,

2   comprising:

3   (a)   logic for receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user, wherein each

4   product identifier is associated with a particular product;

5   (b)   logic for generating a list of the products;

6   (c)   logic for searching for vendors of the products on the list;

7   (d)   logic for selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined criteria; and

8   (e)   logic for outputting information about the selected vendor.

1   16.   A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the product identifier is a

2   representation of a bar code associated with the product.

1   17.   A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the vendor is selected based on the

2   number of products on the list available from the vendor.

1   18.   A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the criteria for selecting the vendor

2   include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor, availability of delivery,

3   whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability, shipping availability,

4   tracking availability, and a loyalty program.

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1   19.   A system as recited in claim 15, further comprising logic for determining an

2   availability of the products at each of a plurality of vendors, logic for

3   determining costs of the products charged by each of the vendors, and logic for

4   outputting summaries of the determinations.

1   20.   A system as recited in claim 15, wherein a promotional offer is output with the

2   information about the selected vendor.

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